such as "MEET ME AT THE RESERVATION DESK AT NOON," by touching display 118 at the appropriate numbers and letters of image 180. The data entered by the player is displayed as shown in Figure 14. Each of displays 118, 118A and 134 can display an alphanumeric input image like image 180. Alternatively, the message shown in Figure 14 may be typed by the player or user by operating keypad 114.

[0061] Communication unit 119 generates a message based on the data entered by the player as explained in connection with Figure 14. The message includes an identification of the gaming location (e.g., 106) to which the message is to be sent or a player ID number. The message is transmitted via controller 148 and network 126 to central authority 120. If a player ID number was entered, central authority 120 checks the ID numbers of players whose cards have been read by the system to find a match. If a match is located, the message is forwarded to the gaming location at which the card was read. If no match is found, the system stores the message in memory 121. When the player with the correct ID number inserts his card into a reader, the message is retrieved from

memory and is forwarded to the proper gaming location for display. In addition, central authority 120 finds the name of the current user of gaming location 102 from the information on the club card 152 used to initiate the gaming location so that the name of the sender can be displayed at the gaming location receiving the message. If a gaming location was entered by the player, central authority sends the message to the proper gaming location, such as location 106, and displays on display 118A the name of the sender, the date, the time the message was sent and the message as shown in Figure 15.

[0062] Figure 15 illustrates the an exemplary message menu displayed on display 118A of gaming location 106 showing the message sent from gaming location 102 to gaming location 106 over network 126 through central authority 120. If a gaming location is entered by the player as explained in connection with Figure 14, the message may be sent directly from gaming location 102 to gaming location 106 without being transmitted to the central authority 120. The date and time at which the message was sent are displayed as shown in Figure 15.

[0063]   The player at gaming location 106 may reply to the message shown in Figure 15 by touching display 118A at the "REPLY" text, at the number 4 to the left of the reply text, or by entering the number 4 on keypad 114A.

[0064]   Figure 16 illustrates an exemplary reply message menu displayed on display 118A in response to a player or user touching the phrase "REPLY" or the number 4 on screen 118A or by entering the number 4 on keypad 114A. The reply menu provides for sending copies of the message to various locations. The personal message menu shown in Figure 13 can be modified to also provide for sending of copies.

[0065]   A reply message is generated and sent in the same manner described in connection with Figures 13 and 14. When the player touches any of numbers 1-3 or the text opposite any of the numbers, a display of the type shown in Figure 14 is generated on display 118A. The player then enters the reply data using image 180 in the manner previously described.

[0066]   Figure 17 illustrates exemplary messages received at service station 132 and displayed on display 134 from gaming locations 102 and 104.   In response to such